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## "Are You White or Dutch?": Hendrina Hospers and Living among Apaches

Douglas Firth Anderson

Northwestern College - Orange City, [firth@nwciova.edu](mailto:firth@nwciova.edu)

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## "Are You White or Dutch?": Hendrina Hospers and Living among Apaches

### Abstract

Hendrina Hospers (1880-1968) was a home missionary of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church in America (RCA). She grew up in a Dutch-American Protestant colony led by her father, Henry Hospers. The colony, centered in Orange City, Iowa, was built around church and school, and Hendrina participated in both. She graduated from the Northwestern Classical Academy (affiliated with the RCA) in 1897. She taught in public schools until both her parents were dead. From 1907 to 1946, she worked as an RCA home missionary, first with the Chiricahua Apaches around Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and briefly around White Tail, New Mexico, then with the Jicarilla Apaches around Dulce, New Mexico. Her missionary career can be at least partially reconstructed from reports she made to denominational publications and from photographs. She embodied the piety instilled in the first American-born generation of the Dutch Reformed colonists who settled in the Midwest and West in 1847 and after. Moreover, she illustrates the understudied importance of single women, Protestant and Catholic, in expanding and sustaining American Christian mission work—domestic and foreign—in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Finally, and beyond being a type, she lived into both sides of a paradox. On the one hand, she was an integral part of the overturning of the lifeways of particular Native American peoples. Yet on the other hand she was integral to the adaptation and survival of those same peoples. She was neither simply a white cultural disrupter nor a white cultural transformer. She was a woman of her time and culture who also managed to partially transcend these through the "lowly service" of living much of her life among Apaches.

### About the Author

Dr. Doug Anderson specializes in the history of the American West and American religious history. He earned a doctorate in the latter subject and spent a year studying at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming.

He is co-author of *Pilgrim Progression: The Protestant Experience in California*, and his articles and book reviews have been published in *Western Historical Quarterly*, *Religion and American Culture*, and *Fides et Historia*, as well as in encyclopedias of the Great Plains and American West.

He has also teamed with other religion scholars on a comprehensive and comparative study of the impact regions have on religion's role in American public life, which resulted in eight geographically based books.

In 2014, Dr. Anderson co-authored a history of Orange City, Iowa, the town where Northwestern College is located. Part of the "Images of America" series by Arcadia Publishing, *Orange City* traces the development of the town from its founding in 1869 through the present.

Currently, Dr. Anderson is working on an institutional history of Northwestern College.

## **“Are You White or Dutch?”:**

### **Hendrina Hospers and Living among Apaches<sup>1</sup>**

by Douglas Firth Anderson, Ph.D.

Miss Hendrina Hospers was Superintendent of the Apache Mission among the Chiricahua Apaches in 1909-1910. The Chiricahua were prisoners of war at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.<sup>2</sup> The mission buildings of the Reformed Church in America consisted of a school, an orphanage, a laundry, and another building which Hattie Hospers—Hendrina’s cousin—called “our home.” Cousin Hattie had arrived in 1909. She commented to her family and friends back in the Orange City, Iowa area about the Apache children, herself, and Superintendent Hendrina:

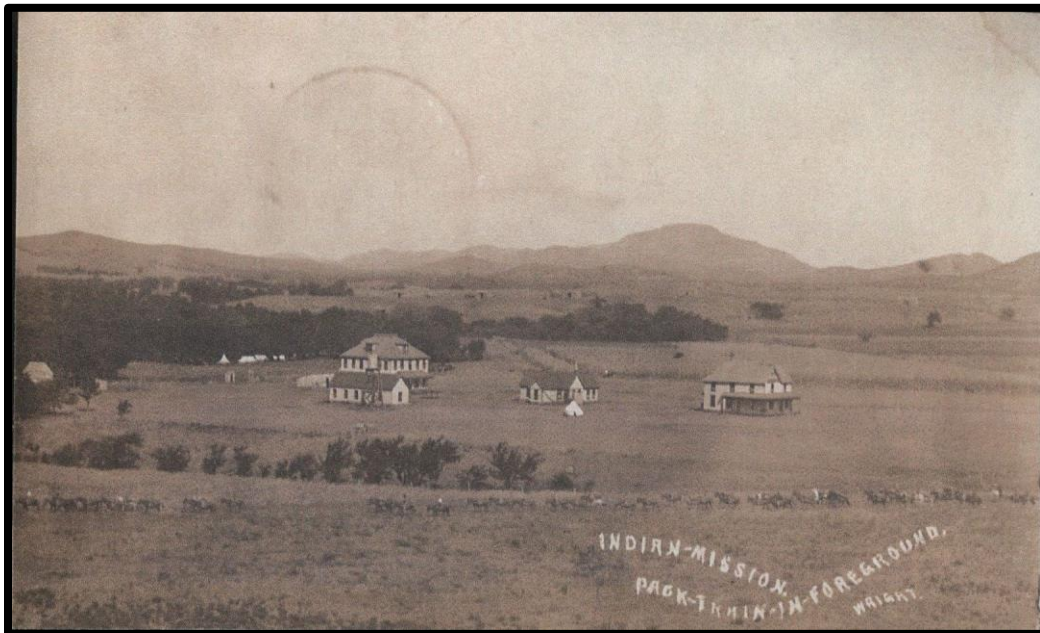
No doubt the little chaps often wondered what business we had coming into their midst and trying to turn their little world upside down. And yet they were interested in us and loved us and knew that we came to bring them brighter and better things. They knew that we were not Indians and yet they could not understand how it was that Miss Hospers and myself were white people and that we also spoke the Holland language. The question was invariably asked during the first weeks: “Are you white or dutch?”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thank you to Greta Grond and Sara Huyser of the DeWitt Library, Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa; Doug and Janine Calsbeek, Orange City, Iowa; Geoffrey Reynolds, Joint Archives of Holland, Holland, Michigan; and Robert Anderson, Jr. of Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Without their help with obtaining materials on Hendrina Hospers, I could not have written this article.

<sup>2</sup> On the Chiricahuas at Fort Sill, see John Anthony Turcheneske, Jr., *The Chiricahua Apache Prisoners of War: Fort Sill 1894-1914* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> “Miss Hattie Hospers of Orange City Writes of her Work in the Apache Mission Field in Oklahoma,” *Alton [IA] Democrat*, March 16, 1910: 6. Hattie was born Henrietta Hendrika Hospers in Orange City, Iowa, 1879; her parents Willem and Maria Korteweg Hospers were Hendrina’s uncle and aunt.



**Reformed Church in America Apache Mission, Fort Sill, 1911.**

Image from Sioux County Historical Society.

Hattie’s words are worth unpacking a bit. The world of the Chiricahuas—like that of other American Indians—was continuing to be turned “upside down.” The two Hospers women were part of a much larger project of conquest and assimilation underway in the Americas ever since Cristóbal Colón (Columbus) thought he had reached the Indies in 1492—and thus encountered “*indios*” (Indians). Turning things upside down varied in particulars over time and place, and certainly between the policies of Spain, France, England, Russia, and the United States. Overall, however, almost all “whites” assumed the right of conquest, white supremacy, and the inextricable partnering of Christianity and civilization.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For example, see Peter Nabokov, ed., *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-2000*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1999); Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2016); Gary Clayton Anderson, *Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime that Should Haunt America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014).

Bringing “brighter and better things” to the Chiricahua or other indigenous groups was perceived and experienced differently, depending on whether one was a missionary or an “Indian”. Missionaries (Catholic or Protestant) believed brighter and better things would eventually come from the usually frustrating efforts to turn Indian worlds upside down. For Indians, what to hope for beyond survival was anything but clear as most of their traditions were assaulted and undercut.<sup>5</sup>

In the particularities of encounter between European Americans and Native Americans over the centuries, perceptions as well as experience are often difficult to substantiate and ambiguous to interpret. It seems likely that the Chiricahua children were indeed “interested in” the two Hospers cousins—but did the children “love” them as Hattie thought? Whether their interest in her and Hendrina amounted to what Hattie considered love is open to question. More likely is that the children were trying to understand “tribes” among whites: “Are you white or dutch?” Why would these white, non-Indian women speak a language that was neither English nor Apache?

Whiteness—the idea of a white “race” and the assumption of its superiority over other “races”—has a history, in the Americas and earlier. Appearance and culture were key determinants of whiteness, but these had some built-in ambiguities that allowed for some individuals and groups to “pass” racial boundaries. Various non-Anglo-European immigrants at times did have to “prove” their whiteness. Practicing Protestantism expedited immigrants being

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<sup>5</sup> For example, see Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), George E. Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), and James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

accepted as white, since, as historian Edward J. Blum has noted, American Protestants have consistently conflated “whiteness with godliness.”<sup>6</sup>

Many Dutch—born in the Netherlands or, like Hattie and Hendrina, born in the U.S.—collectively amounted to an immigrant tribe acculturating in the United States of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>7</sup> They had cultural boundaries of language and of *kerk en school* (church and school) that sustained the identity of the first two generations and beyond.<sup>8</sup>

However, the Hospers cousins and their mission associates working with the Chiricahua Apache were also self-consciously acculturating to white American Protestantism. The Reformed Church in America (RCA), while distinctively Dutch and Calvinist as a denomination, was also eager to be seen as a full partner with other Protestant denominations in building and sustaining a voluntary national religious establishment that was understood to be a subset of a larger Anglo-American Protestantism.<sup>9</sup> The cultural “Christian America” of Protestant whiteness was at its strongest in the nineteenth century, even with the stresses surrounding the Civil War.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Edward J. Blum in “Forum: American Religion and ‘Whiteness’,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 19:1 (2009): 4. See also Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005); Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010); Lauren L. Basson, *White Enough to Be American? Race Mixing, Indigenous People, and the Boundaries of State and Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Martha A. Sandweiss, *Passing Strange: A Gilded Age Tale of Love and Deception across the Color Line* (New York: Penguin Books, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> For a recent critical analysis of the Dutch immigrant experience, see Hans Krabbendam, *Freedom on the Horizon: Dutch Immigration to America, 1840-1940* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. and also Eugene P. Heideman, *The Practice of Piety: The Theology of the Midwestern Reformed Church in America, 1866-1966* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> On Anglo-American white Protestantism, see especially David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005) and Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017) in the 5 vol. History of Evangelicalism series.

<sup>10</sup> On a Protestant Christian America, see Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Henry F. May, “The Religion of the Republic,” in May, *Ideas, Faiths, and Feelings: Essays on American Intellectual History and Religious History, 1952-1982* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 163-86; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*

Well into the twentieth century white Protestants generally, including RCA congregants, sustained what Martin E. Marty has called a “canopy” of religious sensibilities.<sup>11</sup> This canopy included widespread support for the authority of the Bible, the personal and Christocentric nature of salvation, an activist Christian life, and a millennial goal for human history. White Protestant life under this canopy found structured expression in things such as Sunday schools, hymnody, revivals, women’s groups, Christian Endeavor, Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations, and foreign and home missions.

Superintendent Hendrina Hospers and Cousin Hattie of the Apache Mission were home missionaries. Moreover, RCA missions among American Indians came under the Women’s Board of Domestic Missions (WBDM).<sup>12</sup> In 1893-1894, some New York City Reformed Church women were moved to collect funds for Indian missions by a personal appeal from a Presbyterian pastor from Omaha. In 1895 the WBDM engaged the Rev. Frank Hall Wright, a Choctaw Presbyterian evangelist. He began RCA mission work with Comanches and Apaches at Fort Sill, Oklahoma Territory. Eventually, the RCA worked not only with Comanches and Apaches but also Winnebagos and Omahas.

The RCA clergy like the Rev. Wright were exclusively male at the turn-to-the-twentieth-century era. Male supremacy of the time was in tandem with white supremacy. However, women of the RCA and other American Protestant denominations were expanding the boundaries of

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(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989). Blum, *Reforging the White Republic* makes more explicit the white supremacy assumed among white Protestants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

<sup>11</sup> Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion*, vol. 1, *The Irony of It All, 1893-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), chapter 9.

<sup>12</sup> This paragraph is based on LeRoy Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road: The Ministry of the Reformed Church in America among Native Americans* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 73-77.



what was conventionally understood as “women’s sphere,” that is, “home” and “domesticity”.<sup>13</sup>

“We have to get used to doing everything here,” wrote Hendrina in 1910, “even conducting a little funeral service . . . .”<sup>14</sup> Looking back years later, she elaborated for an interviewer: “I did everything from teaching to preaching. I even preached funeral services. I did not, however, perform wedding ceremonies or baptize.”<sup>15</sup> Yet, she seemed to most find herself not as a pastor but in a broadly-defined domesticity: work with women and children.

Hendrina Hospers (1880-1968) is elusive, historically speaking. She left no journal nor substantive correspondence that has, to date, come to light. Hospers appears in scattered denominational mission materials, which include reports in her own voice; she also appears through photographs—of



**Apache Mission Workers. Standing, from left: Hattie Hospers, Anna Heersma, Mary Ewing, Anna Vos. Sitting, from left: Mrs. Morrison, Lucy Marklin, Hendrina Hospers.**

Image from Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum.

herself and of Apaches and of related places.

<sup>13</sup> On Protestant women expanding what was included in women’s domestic sphere, see, for example, Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981); Patricia R. Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Woman’s Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985); Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> *The Mission Field* 23 (June 1910): 76.

<sup>15</sup> Amy Passmore Hurt, “Missionary to the Apaches,” *Frontier Times* 38 (November 1964): 30.



Why is she worth trying to at least partially resurrect out of the obscure past? First, she embodies the piety instilled in the first American-born generation of the Dutch colonists who settled in the Midwest and West in 1847 and after. Hospers was a child shaped by Reformed church and school, with the added legacy—and burden—of being the daughter of her colony’s “father.” Second, she illustrates an understudied sisterhood: single women Protestant home missionaries. Her life alerts us to the importance of religion sustaining many women—Protestant and Roman Catholic, home and foreign missionaries—as they went beyond what perhaps most women of then and now considered ideal, let alone desirable. Third, and beyond being a type, Hospers specifically spent the bulk of her adult life living into both sides of a paradox. On the one hand, she was an integral part of the overturning of Apache lifeways. Yet on the other hand she was integral to the adaptation and survival of the Chiricahua and Jicarilla people. She was neither simply a white cultural disrupter nor a white cultural transformer. She was a woman of her time and culture who also managed to partially transcend these through the “lowly service” of living much of her life among Apaches.<sup>16</sup>

Hendrina Hospers was born on September 18, 1880 in Orange City, Iowa.<sup>17</sup> She was the eighth and last child of Hendrik/Henry Hospers (1830-1901) and Hendrika/Hendrina Overkamp Hospers (1837-1907). (She also had four half-siblings from her father’s first wife, who had died in 1863.) Her father Henry had emigrated as a teenager from the Netherlands to Pella, Iowa in

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<sup>16</sup> J. Denton Simms, “Memorial Service for Hendrina Hospers,” October 2, 1968, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Albuquerque, New Mexico, typescript, p. 2, Archives and Special Collections, Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa, <https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=hendrinahospersdocuments>.

<sup>17</sup> [Orange City] *Sioux County Herald*, September 23, 1880: 5; Nelson Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers: The People’s Friend” (Iowa City: published by the author, mimeograph, 1978), 171, <http://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/henryhospersbiography/1/>.

1847 with the Rev. Hendrik P. Scholte and his *kolonie* (colony). In Pella, Henry Hospers had prospered with a land office; he also was elected a town alderman and mayor, and he launched a Dutch-language weekly newspaper. After the Civil War and also after the death of Pella’s colony



**Hendrina Hospers with her parents and sister Arta (on right)  
at their home in Orange City, c. 1890s.**

Image from Northwestern College Archives.

leader Scholte, Hospers joined other Dutch settlers in establishing the new colony of Orange City, Iowa in 1870. Before his death in 1901, Hospers had among other things platted and named Orange City, established its first store, established a land office, helped organize First Reformed Church, founded another Dutch-language weekly—*De Volksvriend* (The

People’s Friend)—and also a bank, chaired the county board of supervisors, served two terms in the Iowa House and one term in the Iowa Senate, and led in the organizing of Northwestern Classical Academy (NWCA). NWCA, founded in 1882, was formally affiliated with the RCA; maintaining its denominational affiliation, years later it became Northwestern College.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For more on Henry Hospers, besides Nieuwenhuis, see Douglas Firth Anderson, “‘We Are Now Americans’: Henry Hospers, Sioux County, Iowa, and Dutch Settler Acculturation,” *Northwestern Review* 3 (2018), <https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/northwesternreview/vol3/iss1/4/>.

Hendrina, siblings Effie, Eva, Arta, and Isaac, and cousin Hattie as well as Hattie’s future husband G.A. Watermulder were all graduates of NWCA.<sup>19</sup> What was it like to be the youngest, and female, under the patriarchy of her father, the “father” of Orange City, First Reformed Church, and NWCA? There is little to help us see things from the young Hendrina’s vantage. The undated photograph (previous page) of Hendrina with her parents and sister Arta in the Hospers home suggests domestic tranquility. Probably it was taken around the time she graduated from NWCA in 1897, since her father—contentedly smoking a pipe in the picture—went into decline after a stroke in 1899.<sup>20</sup> For graduation, she wrote and delivered a “history” of her class. It may have been herself she referred to when she described “the one who people think so quiet but when you learn to know her better, you are in error.”<sup>21</sup> Although Hendrina was named for her mother, at the Academy she was known as Henrietta or Etta.

Immediately after her graduation, one thing seems clear: Hendrina was dutiful in being available to her parents in their final years. Apart from attending Oberlin College for a year with her sister Arta in 1899-1900, she remained in northwest Iowa, receiving some income from teaching.<sup>22</sup> Death came first for her father in 1901. Settling her father’s estate was difficult, since his bank failed soon after his death. It was not long after closing the estate that her mother died.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Northwestern College 2007 Alumni Directory* (Orange City, IA: Northwestern College, 2007), 330-331. Hattie would marry the Rev. Gustavus Watermulder in 1911 and with her husband serve at Winnebago Mission, 1912-1942.

<sup>20</sup> Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 158-159.

<sup>21</sup> *The Classic*, 6 (June 1897): 5,

<https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=northwesternclassics>.

<sup>22</sup> *Seventy-Fifth Anniversary General Catalogue of Oberlin College, 1833-1908* (Oberlin, OH: 1909), 478; for her residing at home, see *Sioux County Herald*, February 17, 1904: 5; for her teaching, see *Alton Democrat*, April 13, 1907: 1 and *Sioux County Herald*, August 28, 1907: 5.

<sup>23</sup> Nieuwenhuis, “Henry Hospers,” 160-163.

The year 1907 was the turning point for Hendrina. With her mother's death, and with nothing else holding her back, she stepped into what she understood as her calling: to serve Apaches as a mission worker for the RCA. She was single, in her later twenties, and she had no college degree. She did, though, have teaching experience. Also, as would become clear, she had an unassuming tenacity to serve that was rooted largely, it seems, in her personal commitment to Christ.

Apaches are Native Americans bound together by their Athabaskan language but historically divided almost as much as united by their decentralized subsistence lifeways.<sup>24</sup> Migrating from the north (*denali* is the Athabaskan name for the Alaskan mountain that American settlers called Mount McKinley), Apaches arrived in what is now the U.S. Southwest around the early sixteenth century when the region was about to become Spanish America's northern *frontera*. Apache traditional life was based around frequent moves in search of game and edible plants. The meagerness and unpredictability of food supply and the general fragility of their subsistence-level lives probably informed their understanding of spiritual power(s) as capricious. Death and ghosts were especially feared and avoided when possible. Mountains were their preferred environments, but some adapted to agriculture and others to hunting buffalo on the Plains. Traditionally, men often spent extended time away from camp and their families

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<sup>24</sup> This paragraph and the next draw primarily on Richard J. Perry, *Apache Reservation: Indigenous Peoples and the American State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 28-65. See also James L. Haley, *Apaches: A History and Culture Portrait* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997 paperback reprint of 1981 edition); Grenville Goodwin, *Western Apache Raiding and Warfare*, ed. Keith H. Basso (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971); and Paul Andrew Hutton, *The Apache Wars: The Hunt for Geronimo, the Apache Kid, and the Captive Boy Who Started the Longest War in American History* (New York: Broadway Books, 2016). For a stunning analysis of the importance of places to one Apache group (and by implication the importance of places and homeland to all American Indian nations), see Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996). The name *Apache* most likely derives from the Zuni word for enemy; Apaches refer to themselves as *Indeh* or *Dine* (with variations in dialect and transcription).

hunting. They also regularly supplemented hunting with raiding for what they could not easily produce or trade for themselves. Women gathered edible and medicinal plants, prepared food, and engaged in some agriculture at times. Since women provided what stability there was in traditional Apache life by caring for the children, the elderly, and the camps, when Apache men married, they moved in with their wives' families (matrilocal residence). Apache camps were normally not only impermanent, they were also small and socially flexible. Immediate kin were those with whom one lived rather than the tribe; the typical terrain and resources usually precluded large groups gathering for any length of time.

Apache groupings and their names changed over the years. By the mid-nineteenth century and U.S. conquest of what it eventually called the Southwest, there were seven divisions of Apache Athabaskan speakers. The Navajos had settled the closest to Pueblo peoples and had thus borrowed culturally the most heavily from them. The Kiowa Apaches and the Lipans adapted to Plains life but were shrinking either from absorption into the Kiowas or pressure from the Comanches. The Mescaleros concentrated in the basin-and-range lands in between the Rio Grande and the Pecos River. The Western Apaches gathered in the east-central mountains of Arizona, while the Jicarillas roamed the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico and Colorado. The Chiricahuas were the southernmost Apache group, favoring the mountains of southeast Arizona, southwest New Mexico, and parts of northern Mexico. These groups recognized that they were related by language and culture, yet between as well as within the groups they often were suspicious of or hostile to each other.

“Blessed are the meek,” said Jesus, “for they will inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5, NRSV). Hendrina Hospers was arguably meek when she left Orange City in 1907 to become the

Superintendent of the RCA’s Apache Mission at Fort Sill. Even more so were the Chiricahuas by then. Their homeland straddled what became the international border between the U.S. and Mexico before the U.S. Civil War. This made their traditional raiding a problem not only for the “new” white American ranchers, prospectors, and townsfolk but also for military pursuit from either side of the border. Mangas Coloradas and Cochise as leaders had brought some public attention to the Chiricahuas; Geronimo (Goyahkla), though, brought them widespread notoriety.<sup>25</sup> When Geronimo and his small band of followers surrendered to the U.S. Army for the final time in 1886, not only they but all the rest of the Chiricahuas—including those who had been enrolled as scouts by the U.S. Army—were removed from Arizona Territory and held as prisoners of war in various locations to the east: first at Forts Marion (non-combatants) and Pickens (combatants), then Mount Vernon Barracks, Alabama (first only the non-combatants, then joined by the combatants), finally Fort Sill. When initially removed from Arizona in 1886, there were 519 Chiricahuas. At Mount Vernon Barracks in 1887, all the Chiricahua numbered 366; when all moved to Fort Sill in 1894, there were 460. Arizona and New Mexico public opinion sustained their imprisonment until after Geronimo’s death (1909). When they were released in 1913-1914, there were 275 left.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Edwin R. Sweeney, *Mangas Coloradas: Chief of the Chiricahua Apaches* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Edwin R. Sweeney, *Cochise: Chiricahua Apache Chief* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Geronimo, *Geronimo: His Own Story*, original ed. S.M. Barrett, new ed. Frederick W. Turner II (New York: Ballantine Books, original ed. 1906, new ed. 1971); Angie Debo, *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976); Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> On the Chiricahuas as prisoners of war, besides Turcheneske, *Chiricahua Prisoners of War*, see also H. Henrietta Stockel, *Survival of the Spirit: Chiricahua Apaches in Captivity* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1993). The population figures are from Stockel, 172, 189, 256.



Since the Chiricahuas became prisoners of the Army, permission had to come from the military for any mission work. Permission didn't come until 1898; the first RCA mission structures and staff weren't in place until 1899.<sup>27</sup> Until 1907, there was no organized congregation connected with the Apache Mission. Summer camp meetings were held, though, and converts from the Apaches joined the RCA, including Geronimo in 1903.<sup>28</sup>

Hendrina viewed Geronimo's conversion skeptically. Shortly before his death in 1909, she encountered him briefly in passing, she on her horse and he in his buggy. He asked her to buy the hand-crafted bows and arrows he had with him for sale. She replied that she had



**Geronimo with S.M. Barrett (left) and translator, Fort Sill, 1906.**  
Image from Wikimedia Commons.

no money with her, but if he would return with her to the Mission, she would purchase them. He declined, saying he would continue on to Lawton. “I often wonder what might have happened had I been able to persuade him to go back to the mission that night,” she recalled much later. “As it was, he went into Lawton, sold his stock and bought ‘firewater’ with the proceeds. On his

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<sup>27</sup> Turcheneske, *Prisoners of War*, 71-72.

<sup>28</sup> Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 114-119. Contrary to some accounts, there is no RCA evidence that Geronimo was ever suspended or expelled from membership. In his autobiography, Geronimo said, “I am not ashamed to be a Christian, and I am glad to know that the President of the United States is a Christian, for without the help of the Almighty I do not think he could rightly judge in ruling so many people;” Geronimo, *Geronimo*, 181. Theodore Roosevelt was then President, and it so happened that he, too, was a member of the RCA.

way home he fell from his buggy and lay on the wet ground until morning. He died a few days later of pneumonia.”<sup>29</sup>

When Hendrina Hospers arrived at the Apache Mission in September 1907, a RCA congregation had been organized, but there was no church building nor a full-time pastor.<sup>30</sup> Hendrina oversaw the school, orphanage, Sunday school, prayer meetings, and other activities. Apart from occasional visits to relatives and touring on behalf of RCA home missions, she invested her life with the Chiricahua from 1907 through 1913.<sup>31</sup>

Her reports give some of the flavor of her work. In her May 1908 report, three deaths—two from tuberculosis—were balanced by three new confessing church members. “I pray,” she concluded, “that God will give



**Apache Mission Woman's Missionary Society (with male guests).**

**Standing, from left: Oliver, Tsisto' wife, Tom Chiricahua.**

**Sitting, from left, Mrs. Tom Chiricahua, Hendrina Hospers,**

**Nah-thle-tla, Mrs. William Quin-eh.**

Image from Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum.

<sup>29</sup> Hurt, “Missionary to the Apaches,” 30. Other versions of the encounter are in *Sioux County Capital*, December 29, 1955: 16 and Amy Passmore Hurt, “Life Among the Apaches,” *New Mexico*, March 1962, 16.

<sup>30</sup> *Sioux County Herald*, August 28, 1907: 5; Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 120-123. Contrary to Koopman, pp. 120-121 and to Hendrina herself as quoted in Hurt, “Missionary to the Apaches,” 30, I find that she was in Orange City 1905-1906 and did not leave until 1907. See, for example, *Sioux County Herald*, December 20, 1905: 5, May 9, 1906: 5, and August 28, 1907: 5.

<sup>31</sup> For visits to relatives in Orange City and Pella, see *Alton Democrat*, August 8, 1908: 4 and April 24, 1909: 8. For touring for home missions, see *Alton Democrat*, October 9, 1909: 8 and June 29, 1912: 6.

me more faith, more love and wisdom, that I may know just what to say to these people. I love the work and am deeply interested in the Apaches.” In a brief report in August, she matter-of-factly told about the “Woman’s Missionary meeting.” The Chiricahua women would quilt, a missionary anecdote would be read aloud, and coffee and meat sandwiches would be served. When the water was high in the creek, making it difficult to ford, the attendance went down. The group’s president was at least seventy years old. Bible reading and prayers came at the close of the meetings “because they [the Apache women] do not come punctually...”<sup>32</sup>

In her last report of 1908, she mourned another death from tuberculosis:

Blake [Chatto] was too weak to talk, but I read to him from the Bible about the holy city, and talked with him about it. When I went again Blake had died a few hours before, and when I saw his mother she broke out in the mournful death wail.

We had a short service at the Mission, and then came the long ride to the cemetery, a most desolate place, tall grass growing over all the graves.

The traditional mourning practice of burning the deceased’s possessions and abandoning the house further depressed her. “As we stood beside that open grave,” she observed to her pious readers, “I did not wonder at their wailing, for they have only their old superstitious beliefs, and death to them so different from our idea of it.” As with her May report, though, she balanced death with life. She was sober in recounting Blake Chatto’s death, but one can almost see her eyes twinkling in amusement as she recounted traveling to the haying camp:

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<sup>32</sup> *The Mission Field* 21 (May 1908): 28 and (August 1908): 154.

I wish you could see us as we drive to the Sunday afternoon meetings. Six of our workers and five of our Indian children in the big wagon, with our hymn books and folding organ.

A week ago Wednesday night the sky was threatening, and we started out, but no sooner had we reached camp than it began to rain. Nevertheless we drove on singing “There shall be Showers of Blessing” and “There is Sunshine in My Soul Today.” We made a queer picture as we drove about, three on the front seat of the hack, the organ in the middle, and three of us sitting in the back with our feet hanging out. The road was slippery, it was pitch dark and coming down a hill the horses slipped, and we almost upset.<sup>33</sup>

In 1909 Hospers was prepared to tell her readers about the “temptations” of the Chiricahuas to gambling and drinking when they traveled to nearby Lawton. She acknowledged that “many of our Apaches are living strong Christian lives.” Her worries, though, were expressed even more overtly in racial stereotyping: “I sometimes wonder [whether] they [young men] can resist, when I think of their inheritance, how their ancestors have always indulged in their sinful appetites and how they are born with these cravings.” Apparently her ancestors never indulged sinful appetites. Yet she mingled mercy with judgment. One young man confessed to her “his temptation and his sin.” While “some have lost faith in him I could not when I heard him tell his story.” Soon after, “he told me that the previous day he had had a hard fight.” According to Hospers, he said:

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. (December 1908): 315, 316.

“I was lying in my tent when two fellows came in. ‘Want some whiskey?’ they said. I want it. I know I want it, I smell it, but I say ‘I didn’t promise Miss Hospers alone that I wouldn’t take it but God.’ I pray Jesus to come. I pray to Jesus to stand between the whiskey and me, so it wouldn’t come through to me. I know Jesus my friend. I know he strong. I pray Jesus all time,” and he came out victorious.

She concluded her January report with an appeal to her readers to recall “the godly life of your parents and your grandparents” and to pray for “these poor, weak Indians” to resist temptation. “I know God’s grace is sufficient,” she declared; “His mercy is great enough to forgive them and I have faith enough to believe that the time will come when our Apaches will be strong enough to resist the devil.”<sup>34</sup>

Hendrina reflected similar perspectives in 1910. Another young Christian Apache man died “trying to overcome that inherited thirst for liquor, and his own people tempting him.” Despite the tragic circumstances, she was confident: “I believe he has kept the faith, and that God will give him that crown.” She noted that the only way to get to the cemetery, given a rain-swollen creek, was to walk across the railroad bridge. Before another boy’s death, she had visited him. Dutch-American Hendrina—a member of a tribe famous for its cleanliness—was repulsed by the filth of the boy and his home (and by the drunkenness of the boy’s father). However, she sought to be sensitive to the family and to Apache culture from within her own cultural assumptions:

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid. (January 1909): 356, 355, 357.

I mustered up courage—I was afraid I might incur the wrath of old medicine-man Tahnitoo and Mrs. Tom—and asked if it would not cool his fevered face to bathe it in cold water. I had taken towel and soap with me. His face lighted up; he said he had not been washed since he was sick, and I believed it; he was so dirty, his hands I really could not wash clean. I put a pillow-case on his pillow and left sheets for his bed.

She concluded her June report with concern over two dances rumored to be coming: “We dread that, and pray that the faithful ones may be strong enough to stand alone.”<sup>35</sup> Dances were (from a missionary view) primitive pagan traditions that pulled Apaches away from the “brighter and better things” of Christianity and civilization.

A month later, Hoppers commented again on the Woman’s Missionary meetings. She noted how she rode her horse on Thursday mornings to round up the women for the afternoon meeting. The quilts they made (the tops of which Hendrina made herself, for the most part) were sold to raise funds for American Indian and foreign mission work. She also seemed to offer to her readers a glimpse into her heart:

There is very little I can tell you this month, everything moves along quietly, and though some might consider life here lonely we do not. We all love it and do not like to think of the time when we may have to leave our Apaches. This is such a beautiful part of God’s world, when things are a little discouraging, only a look at the beauties of nature round about us, reminds us of God and his love. It is such a blessing that we are permitted to work here for Him.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 23 (June 1910): 75-76.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. (July 1910): 122.



By November, she was by turns anxious, earnest, sorrowful, resigned, and gratified. The Orphanage was quarantined for measles, and a medicine dance was held. “Across the hill we could hear the tom-tom,” she wrote, “the weird voices of the women, then the singing of the



**Apache Mission “Misses,”  
Martha Prince and Hendrina Hospers.**

Image from Fort Sill National Landmark and Museum.

medicine men. I sat near my open window till midnight, listening and praying for our poor people, so deep in sin and superstition.” One young boy died of pneumonia after recovering from the measles. “We buried him yesterday.” She continued: “We had prayed earnestly for his recovery—it means so much to the Mission

influence—but God knows best; His will was otherwise. But it is so hard to have them blame you, when such good care has been taken of the children.” While writing her report, the military post doctor arrived: “I am so glad he came, so he could see our Mission. The first thing he said to me was, ‘What a clean place this is!’ When he had seen the Orphanage and the children he spoke again of the cleanliness, the good home and good care they had.”<sup>37</sup>

Christmas celebrations and camp meetings were annual events for Hendrina. At Christmas, gifts sent by mission supporters were handed out to children around a Christmas tree.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid. (November 1910): 275.

Further special activities, such as “Giving Sunday,” were also featured.<sup>38</sup> Camp meetings gathered Comanches and Kiowas with the Apaches. In the 1910 Fort Sill meeting in September, the Rev. Walter C. Roe reported that “the ladies of the various missions did most earnest and effective service in personal work,” and nine members were added to the church and eleven infants baptized.<sup>39</sup> The following year, Mary Roe wrote “almost all the Apaches, men and women, came forward, feeling their great need at this crisis of their affairs, and looking to God for His help and protection.”<sup>40</sup>

The “crisis” was that the Chiricahuas were no longer prisoners of war, and the military wanted them to leave Fort Sill so that the post could be transformed into the U.S. Field Artillery School. Did all the Chiricahuas have to move to the Mescalero Apache reservation in New Mexico Territory, or would those who wished to stay in Oklahoma be able to remain and have allotments of land?<sup>41</sup> While the military did not want the Chiricahuas, neither did ranchers who leased Mescalero Apache land want them. Congress, the Department of the Interior, and the War Department bickered over where the Chiricahuas should go. Hospers and the RCA missionaries consistently pressed the Office of Indian Affairs and the Interior Department to allow each Chiricahua individual to choose whether they wished to move to the Mescalero Reservation or stay at Fort Sill, and if the latter, to receive allotments.<sup>42</sup>

As the political battle swung back and forth in 1911-1912, Hospers grew into an experienced veteran missionary. She was the one to take the Rev. Henry Sluyter, newly arrived

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid. (March 1911): 454; 24 (March 1912): 446-448; 25 (February 1913): 405; (March 1913): 447-448.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. (December 1910): 323, 324.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. (November 1911): 272.

<sup>41</sup> Turcheneske, *Prisoners of War*, 114-115, 121, 147.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 156-158.

to serve both the Apache and Comanche congregations, visiting around the Chiricahuas in 1911. She appears almost as part of the setting in Sluyter’s recounting of their tour one day in June. Stopping at the Besche family camp, Sluyter noted that “Miss Hospers sat ... on the ground, but rested her back against the side of the house. The interpreter and myself had a position a little more elevated but apparently no more comfortable.” At a later stop, “Miss Hospers and I stepped to the door” and found within a gambling card game underway.<sup>43</sup> While she was not fluent in speaking Apache—an interpreter had gone along with Sluyter and Hospers—visiting the Chiricahua camps was routine for her; she and the Apaches knew each other.

As the division of the Chiricahuas between New Mexico and Oklahoma became more likely, so did the end of the Apache Mission. “We have learned to love them,” she wrote in late 1912, “and it will be hard to break the ties.”<sup>44</sup> Overall, Hendrina considered the Mission a success, as measured by evangelization and church influence. By the 1912 camp meeting, she observed that “I do not believe there are many more than twenty-five Apaches who are not church-members. I do not know if they are all saved, but can we say that of the white churches?”<sup>45</sup> A few months later, she noted that changes for the Chiricahua were coming. Nevertheless, she was hopeful more than anxious for them as she addressed her mission supporters:

Jesus, the Light of the World, has lightened many of these darkened minds and homes, they can carry this Light with them wherever they go, and I know many of them will.

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<sup>43</sup> *The Mission Field* 24 (June 1911): 88.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* 25 (November 1912): 279.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* (December 1912): 317.

You have made this possible by your gifts and prayers. The money and time spent among these Apaches have not been spent in vain, it is like leaven in meal.<sup>46</sup>

When the Mission closed, some 80 of the Apaches who were more open to white religion and agriculture chose to remain near Fort Sill.<sup>47</sup> Apache, Oklahoma and its Reformed Church became their community center.<sup>48</sup>

Hospers went with the Chiricahuas who chose to move to the Mescalero Apache Reservation. A special train carried the 170 Apaches and their accompanying soldiers, missionaries, and medical personnel. At a train stop in Tucumcari, New Mexico, a sizable crowd of curious citizens gathered. The Rev. Sluyter tersely and wryly noted, “Those



**Apache Mission. Standing, from left, Bpy-its-un with cradle and child, Tristone, unidentified, Hendrina Hospers. Seated, from left: Helizabeth Hozhe (child in front), Nah-thle-tla, Martha Prince, unidentified, Dag-tey, Mrs. Benedict Johze, Sr., Amy White.**

Image from Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum.

who knew (?) pointed out Miss Hospers and Miss Prince as daughters or captives of

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. (February 1913): 405.

<sup>47</sup> Jason Betzinez was one Chiricahua who stayed. He also married Anna Heersma, one of the RCA mission workers. See Jason Betzinez with Wilbur Sturtevant Nye, *I Fought with Geronimo* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987 reprint of 1959 original ed.), 161, 170-174, 189-209.

<sup>48</sup> See H. Henrietta Stockel, *Women of the Apache Nation: Voices of Truth* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 120-154.

Geronimo.”<sup>49</sup> Hendrina remembered more about the Tucumcari stop. Despite her several years of working with the Chiricahua, she was unfamiliar with or forgot about the taboo against a man and his mother-in-law being face to face. This taboo forced her to change her initial seating arrangements for families in the railroad cars. Further, the train’s famous Apache passengers led to curious onlookers all along the route, not just at Tucumcari. Finally, her account of the Tucumcari stop was more pointedly humorous: “I was sitting by the car window with an Indian child on my lap. Outside, many people had gathered on the platform. Suddenly a man pointed to me and shouted, ‘There! That’s one of Geronimo’s captive white women and that’s their child!’”<sup>50</sup>

Hospers and the Chiricahuas arrived at Mescalero in early April 1913. The Fort Sill arrivals were settled in White Tail, some 18 miles distant from the Agency. The Mescalero Reformed Church received the transfer of 89 members, including Hospers and Miss Prince. Housing and allotments, however, went slowly. Hendrina and the Chiricahuas lived in tents for months.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, two developments were underway that would combine to offer another opportunity for Hospers. First, a young man named J. Denton Simms (1888-1979) moved to the Mescalero Agency, was baptized, joined the Mescalero Reformed Church, and married Mary Harper, the daughter of the Reformed missionary, the Rev. Richard H. Harper. Simms—born in Texas and raised a Southern Baptist—had come to the reservation in 1907 as the post trader, the same year the RCA established a mission. “I was more than just a twenty-one year old store

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<sup>49</sup> *The Mission Field* 26 (May 1913): 27.

<sup>50</sup> Hurt, “Life Among the Apaches,” 16, 17.

<sup>51</sup> *The Mission Field* 26 (May 1913): 28; (August 1913): 149-150; (October 1913): 221; 27 (July 1914): 126-129.

keeper,” wrote Simms about his life by 1909, a year before the Harpers arrived. “I was, in addition, the postmaster, and a sort of employment officer for the Indians. I liked this, because it put me into close relationship with the Indians.” After his marriage, he soon sensed a call to the ministry. Without much formal education, he began studies in 1914 at the Torrey Bible Institute, Los Angeles (later renamed Biola).<sup>52</sup> Second, funds contributed as a memorial for RCA missionary Walter C. Roe, who had pastored primarily at the Comanche mission at Colony, Oklahoma until his death in 1913, were applied in 1914 to begin a new RCA mission with the Jicarilla Apaches in their northern New Mexico reservation.<sup>53</sup>

Up until 1914, Hospers had worked with the Chiricahua Apaches. Recalling Hattie Hospers’ 1910 phrasing, the Chiricahuas had had their “little world” turned upside down by forcible removal and close military and missionary supervision. In other words, they had had a crash course in adapting to white civilization and Christianity. Hendrina had been an important player in that overturning of the Chiricahuas. She was convinced that they needed to change for their own good, and she did not seem to think that special effort should be made to “redeem” aspects of traditional culture. She grew to understand at least some of the Apache language, but she made no special effort to learn to speak it. Yet, as a woman of her time and her Dutch-American tribe, she lived among the Chiricahua empathetically. Her religious zeal, although often patronizing, was infused with gospel love for the individuals and families she worked with. She had wept and she had rejoiced with “her Indians,” and she had added her voice to the call for

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<sup>52</sup> J. Denton Simms, *Cowboys, Indians and Pulpits: The Memoirs of J. Denton Simms*, ed. D. Harper Simms (Albuquerque, NM: Los Hermanos Publications, 1982), 43-62; quotation from p. 48.

<sup>53</sup> Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 462, 464-465; *The Mission Field* 26 (March 1914): 424.



allotments for the minority who stayed in Oklahoma. For a year she hung with the majority who made the move to their Mescalero cousins.

By April 1914, though, she was back in Orange City. While in Iowa, she delivered talks on mission work with the Apaches and visited relatives.<sup>54</sup> In September, she was appointed by the RCA WBDM to join the Simmses at the new mission to the Jicarilla Apache in Dulce, New Mexico.<sup>55</sup>

The Jicarillas, compared to the Chiricahuas, were afterthoughts in the U.S. policy of civilization and christianization.<sup>56</sup> “Jicarilla” is Spanish for “little basket maker.” Traditionally living in and around the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, they were comprised of two bands, the Llaneros (Plains people) and Olleros (Mountain-valley people). While they were Apache in language and traditional lifeways, they had cooperated with Spanish-speaking settlers to the extent that not only did they bear Spanish names for their tribe and bands but in the latter half of the nineteenth century individual Jicarillas understood and spoke Spanish more readily than English. For a time, they had resided with the Mescaleros. They received their own reservation in 1887 in northwestern New Mexico—nearer to their traditional homeland than was the Mescalero Reservation. With additions in 1907 and 1908, the reservation comprised over 700,000 acres when Hospers arrived in 1914. By then, the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad station was already well-established in Dulce. Dulce was also where the reservation agency, a government school,

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<sup>54</sup> *Sioux County Herald*, April 23, 1914: 5 and *Alton Democrat*, May 9, 1914: 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Alton Democrat*, September 5, 1914: 6.

<sup>56</sup> This paragraph is based on Veronica E. Velarde Tiller, *The Jicarilla Apache Tribe: A History*, rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992) and Veronica E. Velarde Tiller and Mary M. Velarde, *The Jicarilla Apache of Dulce* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012). See also Jack R. Williams, *Jicarilla Apaches: The Forgotten People of Pikes Peak and Southern Colorado* (Florissant, CO: Pikes Peak Research Station, 2004).

and the trading post were. The terrain was mountainous and dry, so allotments for farming were generally doomed. Ponderosa pine forests, however, were plentiful, and commercial logging had started several years before Hospers arrived. The majority of the Jicarillas lived scattered in tents or cabins throughout the reservation, which given its high elevation could become quite difficult to travel in during winter; travel to Dulce was not something that many Natives did if they did not live nearby.

Hospers and the Simmses settled in the RCA mission buildings in Dulce, which were still unfinished when they arrived. The Jicarillas, though, were in a population tailspin. In 1891, they numbered 824; by 1914, they had shrunk to 659.<sup>57</sup> Tuberculosis was the main direct cause, but other diseases also afflicted the people, particularly children. The government boarding school (opened in 1903) along with two day schools were particularly hard hit by disease, and the boarding school closed in 1918. It was remodeled and reopened in 1921 as a sanatorium.<sup>58</sup>

The needs of the Jicarillas were serious in 1914. Hendrina and the Simmses responded. The Simmses remained until 1936, Hospers until 1946. J. Denton Simms functioned as the Jicarilla Mission’s head and minister, even though he was not ordained when he arrived. Hendrina was Simms’ only full-time associate until 1920.<sup>59</sup>

“There was little that could be done to help the Jicarilla spiritually, we decided,” recalled Simms, “until something was done to help them physically.”<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the mission church

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<sup>57</sup> Tiller, *The Jicarilla*, 131.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 142-151.

<sup>59</sup> Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 273-297, 465-466.

<sup>60</sup> Simms, *Cowboys, Indians and Pulpits*, 73.

building was completed just before Christmas, so the first reports on the Jicarilla Mission were about celebrating Christmas 1914. Simms wrote:

This Christmas service was the first service held in the new church. Could you have been with us, to look upon those happy expectant faces, or could you have seen the church filled to the last chair, and the eager, noiseless attention which was given to our Christmas story—a story which many had never heard before—and to our message from you to them, you would have felt as we did—that God was dedicating that first service wholly to His glory.<sup>61</sup>

Into the new year of 1915, though, Simms set the tone of ministry, which Hospers readily followed:

In all kinds of weather, in a buggy or on horseback, Miss Hospers and I went, usually in different directions, to the widely scattered camps throughout that large reservation. We visited the families, getting to know them as people, and learning of their needs. We took food, as we had the resources, to the most needy, and clothing to those suffering most from the cold. We comforted the sick, sent them a doctor, or tried to persuade them to come into the hospital.

Simms noted that Hendrina—sometimes with Mary Simms—“tried to help me there in childbirth, showing them rudiments of sanitation and nutrition for their babies.” Given their own cultural and religious perspectives and their privilege as whites, Simms and Hospers sought to be

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<sup>61</sup> *The Mission Field* 27 (March 1915): 461; also see *ibid.* (February 1915): 426.

culturally sensitive. Simms took pains to elaborate their patient pressure against certain Jicarilla beliefs and practices:

We never ridiculed Indian customs or beliefs. We tried to help the Apaches become stronger—physically, mentally, and morally—and therefore, better able to cope with the changing world around them. . . .

We tried, for example, to persuade our Apache friends that it was not necessary to burn the house in which a death had occurred. . . .

We tried to dissuade them from the notion that one person could bewitch another . . .

We tried to teach them that illness was not caused by an evil spirit. . . .

We sought, if only by example, to persuade our Indian friends that no harm would come to a young man who looked at his mother-in-law. . . .

We tried to demonstrate that lightning and whirlwind were not manifestations of evil—that it was safe to burn wood from a lightning-struck tree and equally safe to put on a hat blown off by a whirlwind. . . .

... At one time, parents would sell a very young girl in marriage, often to an old man able to pay well for her. . . .

We tried to teach parents that twins were a natural, not a supernatural, manifestation. . . .

We tried especially to impress on the Jicarillas the importance of education. . . .

Along the way, of course, we tried by example and precept to teach the Christian moral values—truth, kindness, forgiveness, sobriety, respect for others and the property

of others. I do not mean to imply that all Jicarilla were lacking in these attributes. But their culture did not stress such values to the extent they would need as the Jicarillas faced their inevitable move into a world dominated by the white man's laws and culture.<sup>62</sup>

Hendrina worked well in tandem with Simms. While she worked in Dulce at the Mission as needed, she soon spent most of her time in visiting Jicarillas in their camps—on horseback or with a buggy, eventually in an automobile. She became something of an unofficial Protestant cross between a field matron and a Catholic sister. The Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) of the U.S. Department of the Interior established the field matron program in 1890. Field matrons were federal employees intended to visit Native American women and encourage and teach them sanitation, nutrition, sewing, laundry, health care, and even religious as well as moral instruction. In short, they were to help Indian woman to become more like white middle-class women.<sup>63</sup> Roman Catholic sisters took simple vows and, unlike nuns, were not restricted to a convent or under a rule that prescribed daily prayers.<sup>64</sup> Hendrina Hospers did the work of a field matron without federal pay while living in effect like a Catholic sister—with religious routines and eventually even a community of four “misses.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Simms, *Cowboys, Indians and Pulpits*, 73-77.

<sup>63</sup> On the field matron program, and for an example of a woman who was a Protestant missionary as well as a matron, see Robert A. Trennert, “Mary L. Eldridge: Serving God and Country on the San Juan,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 77 (2002): 145-172.

<sup>64</sup> On the distinction between Catholic sisters and nuns, see Anne M. Butler, *Across God's Frontiers: Catholic Sisters in the American West, 1850-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 9.

<sup>65</sup> The Dulce “misses” besides Hendrina were Edna Vande Vrede (1920-1954), Marie Van Vuren (1929-1959) and Gertrude Van Roekel (1937-1957); see Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 284. For other historical studies of Protestant single women home missionaries, see for example Susan Peterson, “‘Holy Women’ and Housekeepers: Women Teachers on South Dakota Reservations, 1885-1910,” *South Dakota History* 13 (1983): 245-260, <https://www.sdhspress.com/journal/south-dakota-history-13-3/holy-women-and-housekeepers-women-teachers-on-south-dakota-reservations-1885-1910>; Rebecca Herring, “Their Work was Never Done: Women Missionaries on the

Once on the Jicarilla Reservation, Hendrina soon was visiting various camps, as she had done in her later years with the Chiricahuas. Her enjoyment of her work was plain:

After being in “civilization” for half a year, it seemed good to get back to Indians, and especially to Apaches . . . . One of the Camps is at the side of a mountain away from the main road. One day I took the wrong trail, the snow was so deep my pony could hardly go through it, and when I came to any arroya (ravine) I had to turn back. One of the women saw me and walked with me until I hit the right trail.

To-day [*sic*] I went to that same Camp. Velora Largo and her sister who live up there were on their way to the store. They had gone about half a mile when they saw me coming and turned back. It pleased me to think they were glad enough to have me visit them to turn back. They have a dog there that bites, but whenever I come they come to meet me with a big stick to keep the dog away. They even go with me to the next house to protect me. . . .

In another place I like to visit, an old woman and her daughter live. They are so friendly and jabber away in Apache as if I could understand every word. The old woman just put her arm around me and held me tight, and said I was her child. She was not very

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Kiowa-Comanche Reservation,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 64 (1986): 68-83; Anne Marie Baker, ed., “A Doorkeeper in the House of God: The Letters of Beatrice A.R. Stocker, Missionary to the Sioux, 1892-1893,” *South Dakota History* 22 (1992): 38-63, <https://www.sdhspress.com/journal/south-dakota-history-22-1/a-doorkeeper-in-the-house-of-god-the-letters-of-beatrice-a-r-stocker-missionary-to-the-sioux-1892-1893>; Ruth Ann Alexander, “Gentle Evangelists: Women in Dakota Episcopal Missions, 1867-1900,” *South Dakota History* 24 (1994): 174-193, <https://www.sdhspress.com/journal/south-dakota-history-24-3/gentle-evangelists-women-in-dakota-episcopal-missions-1867-1900>; Susan M. Yohn, *A Contest of Faiths: Missionary Women and Pluralism in the American Southwest* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); C.L. Higham, “‘A Hewer of Wood and Drover of Water’: Expectations of Protestant Missionary Women on the Western Frontiers of Canada and the United States, 1830-1900,” *Canadian Review of American Studies* 31 (2001): 447-470. For an engaging memoir, see Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Sister to the Sioux: The Memoirs of Elaine Goodale Eastman, 1885-1891*, ed. Kay Graber (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978).



clean and you might have shrunk from the close touch, but I forget all about germs when I am with them. I cannot help but love these old people.<sup>66</sup>

By 1916, Hospers was well into her work. The Young Women’s Department of the RCA WBDM published in the summer of 1916, “Miss Hospers reports nearly 1,300 calls in the last



**Jicarilla Mission. Hendrine Hospers equipped for visiting.**  
Image from Northwestern College Archives.

nine months;” for children and mothers, she gave sewing lessons and instructions on baths.<sup>67</sup> She often rode out together with the federal field matron with horses “packed with food for the sick and needy, a lunch for ourselves, feed for our horses and a slicker in case of rain,” prepared to stay overnight. Summarizing one

expedition, they visited “a poor rheumatic man” to whom they gave “some oranges and candy;” touched base with a grandmother and a motherless month-old baby being fed with goat’s milk; were blocked from another camp by a fence, a high-running river, and “very roundabout road” which would soon be obscured by the dark; spent overnight with a husband and wife who had

<sup>66</sup> *The Mission Field* 27 (April 1915): 519.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* 29 (July 1916): 148.

lost a not-yet-two-year-old child a few days before. “Poor Alice,” wrote Hendrina about the mother:

Just a slip of a girl, going down with consumption herself. She was very talkative, told us all about her baby. It had tubercular meningitis, but she said it did not die of the disease, it was bewitched. A few weeks before the father said he had tried everything and was looking for some deer hair, which was good Indian medicine. They cannot forget their old superstitions.

Hospers and the field matron slept in the Jicarilla couple’s tent, on saddle blankets and goatskins. “True,” she noted, “the ground was a little hard. Our rest was disturbed by the crying baby in the neighboring tepee, by the goats, by the dogs, and by a cat coming in to steal meat, but I did not for one moment regret I was there.” Hendrina loved the people, but she also loved the outdoors—the created order. “We were loathe to leave the place,” she wrote about the camp where she and the field matron had stayed overnight; “such a beautiful spot for a camp, in a narrow canyon, a little stream of water, fed by a spring, making sweet music as it trickled along.” The wind, the rocks, the wild flowers, “the different shades of green”—“all so peaceful and quiet” and carefree. With her readers in mind, she circled back to her mission as she concluded, “And so every day we go into the homes of these people, winning their confidence with a prayer in our hearts that soon they may be won for the Master. Will you not join us in that prayer?”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid. (August 1916): 181.

Jicarilla “church” weddings (legal as well as religious) were gratefully noted, and a camp meeting was held in late 1916.<sup>69</sup> That Christmas, the Jicarillas who came to the Christmas tree event were more adjusted than in previous years to the white ways of gift-giving: sparingly, and only for those who were present. (The available gifts were, of course, donations.) Simms detailed the roughly 900 gifts distributed: to the men, two items of clothing; to the women, calico and an item of clothing; to the camp children, “dress, stockings, hoods and toys;” to the school children five different presents. Shortly before the Christmas tree event, Simms and Hospers gave an overcoat to a thinly clad Jicarilla male elder. “These missionaries are surely not children of white men, but of God,” the old man said. How this old man was selected to receive a coat and whether there were other elderly in need of coats, let alone other coats to give, was left unsaid.<sup>70</sup>



**Hospers with a Jicarilla woman  
and her baskets.**

Image from  
Northwestern College Archives.

By 1917, Simms claimed 35 confessing Christians among the Jicarillas.<sup>71</sup> Soon, however, the U.S. entered the Great War. More directly, tuberculosis among the children and young people of the reservation refused to diminish. Working with a new Indian Agent, Simms got the federal government to turn the old school into a sanatorium to separate the sick children from the well ones. Further, the government agreed to provide food, clothing, school supplies, fuel, and the

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. (October 1916): 272; (December 1916): 363.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. (February 1917): 467-468.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. (March 1917): 518.

salary of one teacher at a new boarding school to be built, staffed, paid for, and run by the RCA.

In the immediate aftermath of wartime and influenza epidemic challenges, Simms turned to the support Hospers had cultivated for over a decade: “I raised all the money needed (\$10,000) for the first school building in Miss Hospers’ home county in Iowa in the course of a speaking tour.”<sup>72</sup>

The RCA boarding school opened in 1920 and continued for twenty years. It was an unusual arrangement in that it was a religious school with partial funding from the U.S. government. Scripture memorization was important in its curriculum, and all teaching

was in English. However, children were allowed to speak to each other in Apache in all places

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THE MISSION FIELD



THE CHURCH AT DELOR



NEW CHURCH AT WHITE TAIL



CAMP MEETING TIME AT DELOR

**White Tail, where Chiricahuas had been settled on the Mescalero Reservation, 1916.**

Image from *The Mission Field* 29, p. 364.

<sup>72</sup> Simms, *Cowboys, Indians and Pulpits*, 111-113. The quotation is from p. 112. For the school details, see Tiller, *The Jicarilla*, 151. The only Sioux County evidence thus far of Simms’ fund-raising tour is a note in Orange City’s weekly *De Volksvriend*, March 4, 1919: 6. The Dutch-language paper was founded by Hendrina’s father in 1874.

except the dining hall.<sup>73</sup> The lines between church and state in U.S.-Indian policy and administration had never been impermeable. Even though there had been a separate federal boarding school system for American Indians for decades, there was a residual (though fading) religiosity in the federal schools.<sup>74</sup> The assumption that civilizing and christianizing Native Americans were so intertwined as to be only partially separable in practice was still in place in the 1920s, at least formally.<sup>75</sup>

Hendrina certainly assumed the intertwining of civilizing and christianizing in her work, but she had little to do with the school. Instead, she continued to do much the same as she had been doing, though her means of getting around expanded to include an automobile. In the reported words of one Jicarilla husband, “She come to our homes, she show how to clean house, she teach my wife to make bread, she stay when we are sick. Indians like her much.”<sup>76</sup>



**Hendrina Hospers with a Jicarilla woman and an automobile.**

Image from Northwestern College Archives.

<sup>73</sup> Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 279-284, 296-297.

<sup>74</sup> David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

<sup>75</sup> Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, abridged ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 48-63, 198-241, 280-294.

<sup>76</sup> *The Christian Intelligencer and Mission Field* 93, November 22, 1922: 751.

Hendrina’s voice, though, fades in the 1920s and thereafter. This was probably due to multiple factors. For one thing, the staff at the Jicarilla Mission was growing, and while she and the Simmses were senior, she was not formally in charge of the mission. For another thing, her work was not the sort that was readily made into exciting reports month after month for mission supporters. The commonplaces of daily field work faded into the background of reservation life. A report from her from 1943 sounded as if it could have come from 1915 except for the mention of a car and a telephone:

That night we [Hendrina and Gertrude Van Roekel] slept at the Largo store. The next day was windy, but the roads were dry. Cevero had moved his camp but we looked carefully for tracks, and finally found a dim road which we followed to the timber as far as we could. Then we got out and walked. We were about to give up when we saw fresh sheep tracks and heard dogs bark and found the camp. After we had visited our seventeenth camp that second day, the storm increased so that we could hardly see, and we had to quit for the day. ...

Before daylight we were again on our way. Going down Wild Horse Mesa we met Ignacio on horseback. His stepson was very sick and he had had to ride twenty miles to get to a telephone to call the doctor. ...

At our next stop a grandmother, always pleasant, asked for a blanket. Hers was almost in shreds, so we gave her an outing blanket we had in the car. Her thanks were profuse.



We walked to a camp way up on the cliff by a winding trail. ... At Pine Springs . . . we stayed with a young couple who both were in our mission school. Lelia has two lovely children; she tries to train them aright and tells them the Bible stories we give them. She has an extra tent with an old tub for a stove, but it heats the tent well. This was our bedroom.

We were again on our way before sun-up, but we had car trouble once more. ... In all we visited forty-one homes during those four days, and we pray that at least some of the seed sown may bear fruit.<sup>77</sup>

Besides Hospers not being an administrator nor having the education let alone the ordination, marital status, or gender of clergy at the mission, and besides the commonplaceness of her work, there were at least two other sets of factors that kept her and her activities 1918-1946 only fitfully visible to RCA mission supporters and others.

One set of factors had to do with changes in American Protestantism. After the First World War, Protestantism soon fractured over theological challenges. How should the Bible be interpreted in light of historical criticism? What did Darwinian biology and other developments in science mean for Christianity? What did evangelism (and revivalism) and missions (domestic and foreign) mean in light of imperialism, colonialism, and cultural anthropology? Protestant extremes—modernists and fundamentalists—drew partisan lines in the sand, and the Scopes Trial caricatured fundamentalists and evolution.<sup>78</sup> However, most Protestants found themselves in between the theological extremes. Moreover, most Protestants made organizational as well as

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<sup>77</sup> *Intelligencer Leader*, May 14, 1943: 12, as quoted in Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 301-302.

<sup>78</sup> Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America, 1880-1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1982).



cultural adaptations to a more consumerist, corporatist America in which expertise and efficiency were privileged.<sup>79</sup> Among other things, oldline Protestant denominations, including the RCA, implemented more centralized, professionalized, and efficient models for ministerial training, Christian education, financial management, administration, missions, and publications.<sup>80</sup>

Hendrina had been sent out from Orange City by the WBDM. Her reports and her voice had come through to the RCA as a whole via *The Mission Field*, a publication which gathered reports from the WBDM as well as the other RCA mission boards (the Board of Foreign Missions, the Board of Domestic Missions, and the Women’s Board of Foreign Missions). In the 1920s-1930s various denominational organizations and periodicals across Protestantism were under pressure to consolidate—for efficiency and, for separate women’s organizations, to signal movement toward gender equalization. In the RCA, while the WBDM continued until 1951, *The Mission Field* merged with the denomination’s general periodical *Christian Intelligencer* in 1922 to become the *Christian Intelligencer and Mission Field*. Before Hospers retired, there was another publishing consolidation in 1935, resulting in the *Intelligencer Leader*. These publishing

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<sup>79</sup> Two Protestants famous in the 1920s illustrate these trends in different yet intertwined ways. Sister Aimee Semple McPherson arguably illustrates blending conservative Protestantism with consumerism. Mining engineer, humanitarian, and feckless politician Herbert Hoover arguably illustrates blending liberal Protestantism with expertise and efficiency. See Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007) and Glen Jeansonne, *Herbert Hoover: A Life*, with David Lührssen (New York: New American Library, 2017).

<sup>80</sup> Ben Primer, *Protestants and American Business Methods* ([Ann Arbor, MI:] UMI Research Press, 1979); Marvin D. Hoff, *The Reformed Church in America: Structures for Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1985). For a study of what is now the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), see Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks, *The Re-Forming Tradition: Presbyterians and Mainstream Protestantism* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 35-222.

changes, together with what one historian has termed the unraveling of a Protestant missionary consensus, constricted the space for a missionary like Hospers to be heard.<sup>81</sup>

A second set of factors obscuring and even undercutting Hendrina’s work related to changes among the Jicarillas and in federal Indian policy. Among the Jicarillas, their social and cultural decline bottomed out; as the 1920s unfolded, the tribe began to recover. Deaths from tuberculosis peaked in 1919. That same year, tribal proceeds from timber sales, which up to that point had been used to purchase livestock for tribal herds of sheep and cattle, were turned to purchasing livestock for distribution to families (after distributing the tribal herds). The morale as well as the economy of the Jicarilla people improved as they adopted livestock (especially sheep) as a viable way to live in their reservation homeland.<sup>82</sup>

The RCA Mission played a role in this turnaround. Hospers, the Simmses, and others who joined the mission in 1920 and thereafter helped isolate the sick from the healthy with the opening of the boarding school. Hendrina in particular was indefatigable in teaching healthy ways according to white American standards and to coming alongside the vulnerable, the sick, and the dying. Simms as mission head not only supported Hospers’ work, he also drew on his own background as the Mescalero Reservation trader, forging a working alliance with the Jicarilla Reservation’s trader, Emmitt Wirt. “He [Wirt] was the best friend the Jicarilla Apaches ever

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<sup>81</sup> Carol W. Haageman, “The Decline, Fall, and Rise of Women in the Reformed Church in America, 1947-1997,” in *Patterns and Portraits: Women in the History of the Reformed Church in America*, eds. Renee S. House and John W. Coakley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, [1999?]), 149-160; Arie R. Brouwer, *Reformed Church Roots: Thirty-Five Formative Events* (New York: Reformed Church Press, 1977), 100; James Alan Patterson, “The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Mission and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict,” in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, eds. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 73-91.

<sup>82</sup> Tiller, *The Jicarilla*, 112-115, 138.

had,” Simms claimed; “He was the best friend I ever had. He and I were so closely associated in the interests of the Indians for nearly a quarter of a century that I cannot tell my own story of that period without telling his.”<sup>83</sup> Wirt established and used political connections along with the power of his trading post—for his own benefit, but also for what he understood as good for the Jicarillas. Wirt as post trader stood to benefit from the growth of a livestock economy on the reservation—and the Jicarillas benefitted as well. Wirt paid for Simms to journey to Washington, D.C. in 1920 to lobby the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in support of the frustrated Jicarrilla Agent who was trying to implement the further purchase and distribution of livestock to families.<sup>84</sup>

The symbiotic relationship of the missionary and the post trader soon unraveled. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal included a new Commissioner of Indian Affairs: John Collier. Collier was from a wealthy family, but instead of banking, he took up social work. His interest turned to American Indians in the 1920s, and when appointed by FDR to head the OIA, he wrote the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), passed in compromised form by Congress in 1934. Collier and his IRA brought important changes to “Indian Country” (reservations), including a sharper secularization of federal oversight, and thus a chill to all previous cooperation with missionaries. Also, Collier’s IRA and OIA emphasized encouraging reservation Indians not only to form federally-outlined tribal governments but to openly recover tribal traditions, including religious ones.

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<sup>83</sup> Simms, *Cowboys, Indians and Pulpits*, 92.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 114-116.

Thus, between 1934 and 1937, things on the Jicarilla Reservation took a new turn. First, Collier pushed his newly appointed agent to in turn push the Jicarillas toward forming an IRA tribal government. A new government was in place by 1937. Second, Emmitt Wirt was put on notice that his trading post would be purchased by the Jicarilla tribe. This was part of a larger push under the IRA to end private property allotment and to foster reclaiming tribal ownerships of land within and adjacent to reservations. Third, the Rev. Simms, frustrated with the changes, resigned in 1936.<sup>85</sup>

Hendrina stayed on through and beyond the changes. Her perspective on them is hidden by her relative obscurity within the Mission structure. She probably did not welcome the new federal encouragement of dances and other Jicarilla traditional customs. Nevertheless, she continued to do her field work for the RCA. The denomination's school continued until 1940. The Jicarilla Reformed Church (officially organized in 1924) continued under the Rev. John Keuning and then the Rev. Herbert Gee. The “misses of Dulce” composed a sorority which no doubt helped sustain Hendrina's religious convictions and sense of calling. Before Hoppers retired in 1946 (when she reached her mid-sixties), the Mission acquired a house trailer to help in extended visits to the remote parts of the reservation, and a mission building was remodeled into a community house for the Jicarillas.<sup>86</sup>

Retirement was apparently not easy for her. Her heart remained with the Chiricahuas and Jicarillas. Instead of returning to Iowa, she settled in Albuquerque, New Mexico, within reach of both Apache groups. More important, Albuquerque was where the Simmses had moved. She

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 126; Tiller, *The Jicarilla*, 161-175.

<sup>86</sup> Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 280, 284-288, 296-308.

volunteered at Immanuel Presbyterian Church (where Simms was a pastor) and at the Women’s Auxiliary of Presbyterian Hospital. In 1961 she returned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma at the invitation of the Army for the dedication of the Apache cemeteries there. She was unable to journey to the Apache Reformed Church, Apache, Oklahoma in 1966. There, where the Chiricahuas who did not move to the Mescalero Reservation worshiped, an old Fort Sill barracks was renovated and dedicated as Hospers Hall.<sup>87</sup> Two years later Hendrina died of a cerebral hemorrhage a few days after her eighty-eighth birthday. She was buried in Albuquerque.

After he washed his disciples’ feet, Jesus said, “For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15, NRSV). In his eulogy for Hendrina, J. Denton Simms described her as an “unusual woman” who “caught and held a symphony in lowly service”.<sup>88</sup> Christ-centered servanthood certainly characterized what we know of her teaching in Orange City, of her care for her parents, and most clearly, her almost forty years of mission work with Apaches.

Christian service has come in many forms, from many different servants. Neither the service nor servants have been perfect. Moreover, some service is spectacular, and some servants receive much attention—Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta, for example. However, most servants, and arguably most women throughout human history (Christian or not), have been overlooked (arguably mostly by men) and thus effectively forgotten, even in life. Hendrina Hospers was one

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<sup>87</sup> [J. Denton Simms,] In Memorium: Hendrina Hospers, typescript, [1968], in Henry Hospers Family Collection, Series 3, Box 3, folder 11, Northwestern College Archives; Hurt, “Life Among the Apaches,” 35; Koopman, *Taking the Jesus Road*, 143-144.

<sup>88</sup> Simms, “Memorial Service,” p. 2.

Christian woman of her time and place who willingly took on servanthood, and thus has been largely forgotten, both by her Dutch tribe and by the Jicarillas even more than the Chiricahuas.<sup>89</sup>

I agree with William Cronon, who declares, “Our core business [as historians] is resurrection: helping the dead past live again.”<sup>90</sup> Resurrecting Hendrina Hospers historically serves to remind us that Dutch-American Protestants, though small as a proportion of U.S. Protestants, were important players in missions. Her Dutch Reformed piety did not lead her to becoming a cross-cultural broker, but it did open her to learning to love those who were very different from her and her people. Even more, she highlights the role of single women as Protestant missionaries, particularly in the heyday of home and foreign missions in the latter half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. For her, leaving her home and family took her to places where she built anew a domestic community comprised of many Apache women, children, and young people. Finally, what could be called her Protestant spirituality of quotidian service thoroughly leavened her agenda of overturning traditional Apache society and culture. It could easily be Hendrina and her living among Apaches that writer Kathleen Norris describes in her musings on the spirituality that can grow from women’s Christ-infused routine:

Laundry, liturgy and women’s work all serve to ground us in the world, and they need not grind us down. Our daily tasks, whether we perceive them as drudgery or essential, life-supporting work, do not define who we are as women or as human beings. But they have a considerable spiritual import, and their significance for Christian theology, the way they

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<sup>89</sup> Northwestern College, including its previous institutional forms, has a tradition of alumnae and alumni who have taken up foreign and domestic mission work. Hendrina Hospers was arguably a forerunner in personality and family culture of foreign missionary Arlene Schuiteman; see Jeff Barker, *Sioux Center Sudan: A Missionary Nurse’s Journey* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2018).

<sup>90</sup> William Cronon, “Storytelling,” *American Historical Review* 118 (February 2013): 6-7.

come together in the fabric of faith, is not often appreciated. But it is daily tasks, daily acts of love and worship that serve to remind us that the religion is not strictly an intellectual pursuit .... Christian faith is a way of life, not an impregnable fortress made up of ideas; not a philosophy; not a grocery list of beliefs.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Kathleen Norris, *The Quotidian Mysteries: Laundry, Liturgy and “Women’s Work”* (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 76-77.